

1. (Twice Amended) A method for encoding digital data in a hardcopy rendering of an invisible image defined by at least one circularly asymmetric dot pattern, said method comprising:

modulating said dot pattern in accordance with said digital data; and
rendering said modulated dot pattern into a tiled halftone cell of predetermined visible color and size on a recording medium, thereby producing said hardcopy rendering of the invisible image with said digital data encoded thereon, wherein each dot pattern occupies 2% of a matrix.

2. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined visible color is yellow.

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined size is a 12 x 12 matrix.

REMARKS

I. Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

By the present Amendment, Applicant proposes to cancel claim 4, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, to amend claim 1 to more appropriately define the invention, and to amend claims 2 and 3 to correct informalities.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,315,098 to Tow (hereinafter, Tow) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,000,613 to Hecht et al. (hereinafter, Hecht) and EPO 590 884 B1 to Sasanuma et al. (hereinafter, Sasanuma). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.